

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

ROMAN ROAD AND CAMPS (in the heart of the Lancashire countryside,)

In the heart of the Lancashire countryside, nestled among rolling hills and picturesque landscapes, lay a hidden network of ancient Roman roads and camps. These relics of antiquity spoke of a time long past, when the might of the Roman Empire extended its influence far and wide.

One evening, a group of history enthusiasts gathered in a small village hall to listen to Mr. Wilkinson, a local historian well-versed in the secrets of the region. As the audience settled into their seats, Mr. Wilkinson began to share his knowledge about the Roman road that traversed the township of Worsthorne.

The road, he explained, stretched from Colne, known as Colonia in Roman times, to Cambodunum, present-day Slack near Elland. It wound its way through the countryside, passing through Shelfield and the upper part of Thorsdean, before venturing into the rugged Pennine Range at Widdop Head.

Amidst the captivating tales of this ancient thoroughfare, Mr. Wilkinson spoke of the remarkable camps that dotted its path. Perched on the brow of a hill above "Broad Bonk," the audience learned of a circular camp that spanned approximately 30 yards in diameter. Its center, once level as a bowling green, was encircled by breastworks built for defensive purposes.

Further along the road, atop Extwistle Moor, stood another Roman camp, its walls stretching around 45 yards square. This camp, Mr. Wilkinson claimed, was one of the most well-preserved examples in all of Britain. Outlying breastworks added an extra layer of protection to the encampment, standing as a testament to the Roman's military ingenuity.

Not content with just these two fascinating camps, Mr. Wilkinson continued his tale. He spoke of another camp on Worsthorne Moor, a short distance to the east of "Halstead Cote Nook."

This camp, he noted, remained in remarkably good condition, bearing witness to the enduring strength of its construction.

The purpose of these entrenched camps became evident as Mr. Wilkinson explained their historical significance. The Romans had constructed them to maintain open communication across the rugged and inhospitable Pennine region. These wild and barren lands posed challenges for the Romans, but their unwavering determination pushed them forward.

As Mr. Wilkinson painted a vivid picture of the past, the audience's imaginations took flight.

They could almost hear the echoes of Roman soldiers' footsteps, toiling up the steep slopes with the songs of their distant Italian homelands on their lips. These camps became symbols of Roman power and conquest, testaments to the mighty eagles that once soared triumphantly from the shores of the western seas to the far-flung tablelands of Asia.

The lecture concluded, leaving the audience with a newfound appreciation for the rich history etched into their local landscape. Inspired by the tales shared that evening, some individuals set out to explore the Roman road and camps for themselves. They wandered along the ancient path, tracing the footsteps of those long gone, and marveled at the enduring legacy of the Roman Empire.

And so, the story of the Roman road and camps in Worsthorne continued to captivate and inspire, connecting the present-day inhabitants with a distant past and reminding them of the remarkable feats achieved by those who came before.

By Donald Jay.